

## A Modest Hope

*By Diane Holman*

I have an old *jocote* tree in my backyard. Right now it is loaded with fruit, tight green berries that will mature in the sun. There are no leaves on the spreading limbs. They have all fallen in this dry season, fallen and been raked up by José and burned in day-long controlled fires at the back of my property.

Today feels like the best morning of my life. I am 67 years old and enjoy good health. I awake to sun-dappled shadows of green. I breathe in the air from the open bedroom window, stretch and throw back the sheet and blanket, rising to the openness of a day without work, yet another day without work, a day of inhabiting the planet in time that is my own.

My dog Hera greets me when I open the bedroom door. She walks with me as I make my way into the kitchen, to measure out coffee and water and turn on the machine. My other dog, Hecate, remains asleep in her chair in the guest bedroom. She does not understand the appeal of early morning.

I pour dog nuggets into two bowls, run fresh water into two others. I take Richard Rorty's Philosophy and Social Hope out onto the deck and settle in to read about Emerson and Whitman and Dewey, to recall in my soul what my birth country—the United States—was founded upon: inclusiveness, egalitarianism, the sweeping joy and hope of democracy: the exciting prospect of it all.

Our souls are equal to democracy, I'm sure. We thrill to diversity and equality. We glory in live and let live.

A great American poet said: "Something there is that doesn't love a wall". Yes! Something there is that longs to touch the other. Something that loves the being-ness of the other. Something that finds each impeccable, worthy of respect. Something that wishes well to each.

It is this which must flourish once again.